

H A R O L D;

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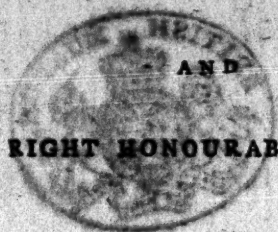
A

T R A G E D Y.

BY

THOMAS BOYCE, A. M. K

RECTOR OF WORLINGHAM IN THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK,



CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF SUFFOLK.

Ὡς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε καὶ ἀνάγει πάλιν
Ἀπαντα τ' ἀνθρώπεια.

SOPHOCLIS AJAX.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR; and sold by T. BECKET, in *Pall-Mall*.

M DCC LXXXVI.

554

W. M. A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. W. X. Y. Z.



W O G W O I

1944-1945

THE following Drama was in its present state when the Author learnt that Mr. CUMBERLAND's Tragedy on the same subject was in rehearsal at Drury-Lane Theatre. Conscious of the inferiority of his own abilities, whatever ideas he had formed concerning it, previous to his knowledge of this circumstance, immediately vanished, and the Piece has been thrown by for some years. In the present publication, the Author is not become so vain, as to intend entering into any degree of competition with the ingenious and justly-admired Writer above mentioned. He humbly submits the Tragedy of HAROLD, with all gratitude, to the partiality of his Friends, and with all deference and respect, to the candour of the Public.

This following Drama was in its first state when the
Author knew that Mr. C. was a Trinity of the
same kind as the original at Trinity and Trinity. Com-
munications of the kind of its own kind and its own kind
had been occurring in the past to his knowledge of the
circumstances, particularly in the past. The fact has been
shown by the fact that the present publication, the
Author is not becoming known to the public and its own kind
degrees of cooperation with the public and its own kind
which are mentioned. The public is the Trinity
of Harriet, with all its own kind to the public of his
Trinity, and with all its own kind and its own kind
of the public.

TO
Lady *BEAUCHAMP PROCTOR*,
OF
LANGLEY PARK
IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK,
FROM MOTIVES OF THE MOST PERFECT FRIENDSHIP,
ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,

THIS TRAGEDY

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HER LADYSHIP'S

MUCH OBLIGED

AND MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

Thomas Boyce.

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PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

HAROLD, *King of England.*

GURTH, }
LEWIN, } *Brothers of Harold.*

STIGAND, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

MORCAR, }
EDWIN, } *English Earls.*
RANULPH, }

EFFRED, *an Officer.*

A MONK.

CHRISTINA, *Harold's Queen.*

EDITHA, *Sister of Harold, and Widow of Edward the
Confessor:—Superior of an Abbey.*

SCENE,

An Abbey, or a Lawn between the Abbey and the English
Camp.

THE BOARD OF

HAROLD

GUTHRIE

LEWIS

STEWART

MORRIS

SMITH

WATSON

WILLIAMS

WILSON

WYATT

WYATT

CHRISTIAN

CHRISTIAN

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H A R O L D;
A T R A G E D Y.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*A Lawn rising from the English Camp to a large Wood, in
which an Abbey is situated.*

GURTH, LEWIN.

GURTH.

FROM yonder tented plain, how gracefully
The green lawn rises to this ample wood!
Deep in whose shades the venerable tow'rs
And lofty spires, crown'd with the sacred cross,
Uprear their heads—Religion's awful reign.
Hail, holy solitudes!—would I could bid
Peace be among you!—but fair Peace is fled.
Beneath the broad shade of the branching oak,
That spreads around an hundred arms to shield her,
Oft would she sit, delighting still to hear

B

The

The Shepherd's pipe upon the plain below;
 While ever and anon the solemn sound
 Of pealing organ, or the shriller voice
 Of choral Virgins, from those hallow'd walls
 Burst on the sense, and rais'd the raptur'd mind
 From earth to heaven.

LEWIN.

Such musings are no more.

The lofty clarion breathes a louder strain;
 And Contemplation, starting from her trance,
 Wildly beholds the threat'ning world in arms.
 High on a radiant car, his steeds of fire
 Guided by Destiny, comes glorious War:
 Beneath the terror-nodding plume he moves,
 Lovelily dreadful,—and with giant arm
 Scatters his Lightnings round: his march is Thunder:
 Creation seems to shrink at his approach:
 The mountains yield to his resistless course,
 And rivers roll obedient to his bidding.

GURTH.

And yet his power, his splendor, charm not me;
 Proud qualities, that mock at misery:
 Some busy demon, in our idle dreams,
 Gives life and beauty to such vanities.
 What hinders else, while bounteous Nature shows
 Her blessings all around, to every clime
 Dispensing largely more than man enjoys,
 What hinders that beneath his native roof
 He taste the richly-flavour'd cup that offers,
 And thank his God, and cherish his repose?
 But Peace and fair Content instead, we view
 Rapine, and rage, and wild ambition, rule:

Seiz'd

Seiz'd with insatiate fury, nations rise,
Quitting their kind and hospitable homes,
To wrest from others what the hand of Heav'n
Freely bestow'd to all.

LEWIN.

The felon wolf,
Who prowls at midnight, and invades the fold,
Rouses the sturdy shepherd to the fray,
And pays at length the penalty of blood.
So shall these bold invaders, who have dar'd,
With blind temerity, to pass the bounds
That fence this favour'd isle, in terror flee
Before the vengeful sword of English Harold,
Or yield their carrion carcases to strew
These fertile fields, and glut our birds of prey.

GURTH.

Yes, we have oft, though furious his assault,
Repuls'd the stout Barbarian, rude in arms,
And with wide slaughter chas'd him to his ships:
But here a different Enemy is found:
The war-accomplish'd Normandy proclaims
His bold approach; leading, pre-eminent,
A gallant train of Princes, Nobles, Knights
Of high renown in ancestry and arms.
Nor these disdain the inferior arts of war:
From rank to rank, subordinate descends
The tactick lore; till through the numerous host
Each soldier feels the force of goodly order,
And Discipline inspires a confidence
Which Victory is wont to justify.
Such is the Foe;—nor comes he to destroy,
To captivate—and then to bear away

The sudden spoil:—his haughty claim extends
 To lasting empire;—built on vague pretence—
 Some deed—I know not what—of holy Edward,
 To give the heirs of the royal line,
 E'en Harold's blooming bride, the fair Christina,
 To his ambitious arms.

LEWIN.

Did not her heart,
 Discerning right of merit, modestly
 Consent to gratify a Nation's vows,
 And Harold's virtuous love? and dares this Chief
 Of vassal Normandy affect to impose
 His odious rule on free-born men, and sway
 The sovereign sceptre of imperial England?

GURTH.

The value of the prize attracts the spoiler.
 But lo!—with speed advancing, I espy
 A gallant Troop, bright on whose burnish'd helms
 The setting sun-beams play; and in their front,
 More radiant than the rest, like Hesperus
 Who leads the starry host, Harold appears.—
 This is the spot to which the King did point,
 Commanding our attendance, that ere yet
 The numerous Chiefs assemble, he may hear
 Our secret counsel:—And behold, he comes.

LEWIN.

Such did I see him at the Derwent bridge,
 When Norway like a mound oppos'd his passage:
 Dismounting eager from the lofty steed,
 His armour rung,—when sudden forth he drew
 His flaming sword, and, rushing on the Foe,

With

With dreadful valour dealt his blows around.
O for another day like that!

SCENE THE SECOND.

HAROLD, GURTH, LEWIN.

HAROLD.

Fair love and honour wait my noble Brothers!
Enough of glory have their arms atchiev'd;
Enough of blood hath stain'd our native land.
Ah! Queen of Isles, whose matchless beauty charms
The Nations round, how rudely art thou woo'd!
Thy Lover still some base and sordid robber,
The fierce Norwegian, or the plundering Dane,
Who spoils thy wealth and revels in thy ruin;
Or else a bold and bloody ravisher,
Who, like the Norman, resolute and strong,
Presents the threat'ning dagger to thy throat,
And bids thee yield to his detested lust!

LEWIN.

Rous'd at her wrongs, regardless of their wounds,
Our valiant troops indignant snatch their arms,
And call aloud to battle.

HAROLD.

Well I know
How keen the soldier feels his Country's wounds,
Unfelt his own.—O 'tis a generous valour!
My breast too feels the sacred glow of glory.
But still the Prince, the Father of his People,

Is ever studious how to spare that blood
Which Valour loves to spend too prodigal.

GURTH.

Ere this, the fame of your late victory
Hath reach'd the Norman camp;—his bold Allies
Defeated and dispers'd; that wary Chief
To prudence may submit his high pretensions,
And stoop to peace.

H A R O L D.

Could honour point the means
By which a free and independent King,
His realm invaded, his crown, his Queen, and all
His dearest rights, claim'd by a bold usurper,
Might seek for peace—I were the first to seek it.

L E W I N.

Honour is now in arms, and scorns all terms
But those of blood.—High o'er yon eastern hills,
Soon as the Sun relumes his golden lamp,
In bright array draw forth the banner'd host;
Bid sound the lofty instruments of war;
And ere his fires descend, we'll nobly take
A deep and just revenge for injur'd honour:
Honour by victory should give us peace.

H A R O L D.

Not always Victory attends on valour.—
Awhile she deigns to rest upon our banners;
But fickle as the wind, perchance to-morrow,
Displays her purple pinions to the sky,
And lifts her with the Foe.

GURTH.

A TRAGEDY.

15

GURTH.

The time looks fair,
By late advantage to improve our strength,
Or to effect a necessary peace.
Propose to Normandy a dazzling price,
The purchase of a crown, to quit his claim.
Thus Avarice with Ambition shall be held
Awhile at strife—and at the worst we gain
Delay—more sweet than balm, to men far spent
With long fatigue, and sore with many a wound.

LEWIN.

Our hardy veterans hold fatigue in scorn.
No firmer bands did ever march in arms,
Or form the embattled field. Have we not led them,
Patient of toil, and ardent for the fight,
From distant Derwent to this southern shore?
Still with firm step we saw the long array
Climb the steep hills, or pour upon the plain.
To the high-sounding musick of the war
The practis'd pace kept time, and songs of triumph
Swell'd the big chorus to the vaulted sky.
E'en now, impatient to attack the Foe,
They quit their restless tents, prepare for action,
And murmur at the vain repose you offer.

HAROLD.

Such generous ardour is not like to cool,
But rather will burn stronger and more bright:
For should the haughty Enemy persist
In terms like those which first his pride suggested,
This honest zeal, which now indignant flames
With rage intemperate, to more effect

Shall

Shall beam one general glow, when Virtue give
The sole alternative, Freedom or Death.

LEWIN.

Insulted, brav'd, e'en on our native shore,
Cover'd with foul dishonour as we are,
What cautious counsellor is found so tame,
So abject, to accept this embassy,
This honourable embassy, to kneel
The proxy of a great and warlike King,
And at the footstool of a bold Invader
Implore his gracious mercy and protection?

GURTH.

Were there none abler found, myself am he
Would seek to heal my bleeding Country's wounds.
But many a Captain in this gallant host,
More wise and more experienc'd, nor less valiant,
Whose firm knee scorns to bend, unless to Heav'n,
Or to his legal Lord, would rather wish,
By arts of policy, to defeat the chance
Of war, than meet it dubious in the field.
And lo the Man!

SCENE THE THIRD.

HAROLD, GURTH, LEWIN, MORCAR.

HAROLD.

Thrice welcome, noble Morcar!
From thy still faithful hand I do expect
A pledge right well confided, though more dear
Than empire, or than glory.

MORCAR.

MORCAR.

Gracious Liege,
Within yon hallow'd walls the Queen is lodg'd,
With holy Editha, the royal Abbess.
There too the good Archbishop finds a shelter,
Where best his reverend wisdom may assist
Your urgent counsels, yet not share our danger.
No foe may dare profane their sacred safety,
Or shock with rude alarms their hallow'd peace.

HAROLD.

Trust not too far an enemy in arms;
For power is daring, e'en with what belongs
To Heav'n.—The chosen bands which brought them hither,
Extend along this height; so shall they serve
At once to guard the seat of sovereign beauty,
And to support the battle where it bleeds.
On this same spot erect thy spacious tent,
And at each proper distance sentries place.
Ere long, it may be, we shall need the advice
Of our assembled chiefs.—Meanwhile, my Brothers,
Hie to your posts, and see that all remain
In goodly order.—You know the disposition.

GURTH AND LEWIN.

We shall obey.

C

SCENE

SCENE THE FOURTH.

HAROLD, MORCAR.

HAROLD.

Still, noble-minded Morcar,
 Let the dull spirit, all too indolent
 For active life, declaim against the pomp
 And cares of royalty:—I know their weight,
 And cheerfully do bear the illustrious burden.
 Yes, I have wish'd to reign, and fain would hold
 A generous empire o'er the hearts of men,
 Of free-born men:—say, looks this like ambition?

MORCAR.

Far, far unlike.—Ambition is that fiend,
 Permitted oft to range this upper world,
 The minister of wrath, to scourge mankind.
 In yonder hostile camp, aloft he bears
 His tow'ring crest, and proud, affects to stride
 O'er this fair isle.—True royalty is here.
 It is the sacred power of doing good;
 Usurp'd not, but decreed to noblest merit;
 To Harold by the voice of millions, that
 The first in virtue might be first in power.

HAROLD.

Long time at awful distance I beheld
 The dazzling prize;—mean while Christina shone
 With lovelier lustre, and benignant smil'd
 On every effort, aiming to deserve her.

For

For know, my Friend, whate'er I have perform'd
Of honour, to myself or to my country,
Love still did urge me on to noble darings,
While Glory wav'd her crimson banner high,
And beckon'd me to follow.

MORCAR.

While Love inspires,
And Glory leads the way, we still shall conquer.

HAROLD.

Ah! gentle Morcar, thou, of heart more soft
Than virgin tenderness, wilt patient bear,
Or gently chide the weakness of thy friend:
For still, as early confidence grew strong,
Whene'er some fond, some generous circumstance
Of my Christina's love hath met thine ear,
Oft have I mark'd a sigh escape thy bosom;
And oft, amidst the tender tale, thou'lt wish'd
To hear no more—then begg'd me to proceed.

MORCAR.

Yes, Harold, yes, my Sovereign and my Friend,
There is some quality, I know not what,
Lives in my nature, that loves to sympathise
With all the feelings of thy noble heart.
When thou hast talk'd of Love, and of Christina,
I've felt the same soft passion in my breast;
Or when I've seen thee rous'd to martial deeds,
That instant hath my bosom caught the flame,
And I have sought to rival thee in glory.

C 2

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

O Glory, rob'd in radiance like the Sun,
 Pour thy immortal lustre on the deeds
 Of those brave men, who from a foreign yoke
 Have sav'd their country, and give us to behold
 And emulate their fame!—But, ah! ere this
 My Queen, my Love, expects me,—Like some poor bird,
 Sequester'd from its mate, the pines in absence,
 And dreams a thousand dangers round us both.
 Honour may surely grant a little parley,
 When we would speak some comfort to affliction.
 Farewell—I need not say remember.

MORCAR.

Your orders in the instant are obey'd.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

MORCAR.

He's gone—and whither? To his lovely Queen;
 To soothe her sorrows, and to hush her fears;
 To pour the balm of comfort in that breast,
 More pure than Innocence, and bid once more
 Heav'n open in her smiles.—Yes, there is somewhat
 Lives in my nature, sympathizing still
 With Harold's heart.—He saw and lov'd.—Alas!
 I saw and lov'd;—but I have lov'd in secret.
 Too near his brighter sun, my humble star
 Veil'd its diminish'd head.—His nobler worth,
 And more exalted state of right prevail'd,

And

A T R A G E D Y.

And won the royal fair-one to his arms.
Be firm, my heart, be faithful to thy trust,
Nor let the traitor Love attaint thy virtue.
Let guilty Greatness think me fool, or coward;
Coward in crimes, or fool in policy:
Yes—I thank Heav'n—I dare not be a villain.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE THE FIRST.

An Apartment in the Abbey.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA.

EDITHA.

COMPOSE thy sorrows, and allay thy fears;
 Be confident in Heav'n, who loves to try
 Our virtue by affliction, but reserves
 Enough of happiness in store, to pay
 More than our present sufferings deserve.

CHRISTINA.

In Heav'n I hope—for Harold yet I fear.
 Unus'd to all the rude alarms of war,
 So many dangers seem to hover round us,
 That now, with deeper dread, I view the perils
 To which the fearless warrior is expos'd.
 May Heav'n still guard him, and restore our peace!

EDITHA.

He seems, so far as human eye may reach,
 He seems the chosen instrument of Heav'n,
 From civil discord, and from foreign rule,
 To save his country; and if we deserve it,
 Heav'n will be gracious to us, and protect him.

CHRISTINA.

CHRISTINA.

If the devoutest offerings of the heart,
 If prayers avail, unceasing I have pray'd;
 A thousand times invok'd each Saint above;
 Pour'd forth my vows at every holy shrine;
 And as the knee-worn stone grew wet with tears,
 Still have I dried it with this wretched hair.

EDITHA.

Before the throne of grace for ever kneels
 The cherub Piety, nor kneels in vain;
 Mercy accords, and Peace the pardon signs.

CHRISTINA.

Thou once wert of this world;—O tell me then,
 How hast thou learnt this saint-like resignation?

EDITHA.

Alas! thou know'st that once, like thee, I wore
 The gorgeous robe of earthly royalty;
 Like thee, th' anointed Queen of this fair realm,
 King Edward's wife, though now the spouse of Heav'n.
 Long exercis'd in cares, and vers'd in woes,
 Affliction taught me to be proud no more;
 Affliction taught me, that by calm content,
 And meek submission to the will divine,
 E'en here on earth we may converse with heav'n.

CHRISTINA.

Affliction teaches well;—but sure her rules
 Are harsh and bitter:—she's no kind instructress.
 But here comes one, whose words are all of honey:

The

The breeze that whispers through the woodbine bower,
Brings not such balmy softness to the senses.

SCENE THE SECOND.

HAROLD, CHRISTINA, EDITHA.

HAROLD.

Peace to these holy mansions, and to all
Their chaste inhabitants! My honour'd Sister—
And O my Wife—again these arms infold you;
Again we meet, and mingle virtuous transport!

CHRISTINA.

To hold thee thus, though but a little moment,
Were more than all the rest this world could give.
O I have seen thee cover'd o'er with wounds,
And many a bloody death beheld thee die!
How could I fear that danger should attempt thee?
From thy brave presence Peril shrinks back appall'd.
Safety and sure protection dwell beside thee;
The tempest that was black'ning o'er our heads,
Is scatter'd in the sky; and now, again,
The joyous sun shines forth on peace and love.

HAROLD.

With such a voice—so sweet—did Angels sing
Peace and good-will to men,—O may it be
Prophetic! that the nations may rejoice,
And join with me to call the sounds divine.

EDITHA.

A TRAGEDY.

25

EDITHA.

To mortal sense when all around is dark,
Near many a dangerous precipice profound,
In icy paths and narrow though we tread,
Heav'n leads the faithful traveller along,
To banks on which the year for ever smiles,
And bids the weary wanderer repose.

EDITHA.

And here methinks that sweet repose is found.
These high-arch'd roofs, and long-drawn alleys, no more
Diffuse a sad and solitary gloom;
But like the bow'rs of blooming Paradise,
Where the first happy pair awhile reclin'd,
A peaceful, over-pleasing shade they form,
And Love and Innocence beneath it smile.

HAROLD.

Witness, ye Saints, who hear our holy vows,
And join our prayers in heav'n;—witness, ye Stars,
Who still have shone propitious on my fortune;
And thou, bright Moon, whose soft and silver rays
These long, historic windows now illum—
Witness these warm effusions of my heart—
That in some cave of the sea-beaten cliff,
Where winter ever reigns, and waves and winds,
In mingled tempest, never cease to roar;
To live, converse, and ever to behold thee,
Were happier, than, sequester'd from thy side,
O'er ample realms to reign in peace and splendour.

D

EDITHA.

CHRISTINA.

EDITHA.

Yes, Splendor dwells in courts and palaces;
 But Peace, the gentle, heart-felt, lasting Peace,
 Far from the thronged state and pomp of Power,
 In calm retirement only will be found.

CHRISTINA.

Then why am I the pageant slave of greatness?
 Why was I born to wear a wretched crown;
 To groan beneath the proud imperial pall,
 And over men a weary sceptre sway?
 Since pow'r delights not me, nor purple pomp.
 Clad in the simple vest of rustic neatness,
 In some mean cot, down in the humble dale,
 A few poor sheep my subjects, thou the Shepherd,
 Blest in thy love, how happy had we held,
 In sweet tranquillity, our rural reign!

H A R O L D.

And yet e'en there the storms of angry fate
 Might beat upon us, and o'erturn our peace.
 Up by the roots when the strong whirlwind tears
 The huge and knotty oak, a thousand shrubs,
 That flourish'd in his far-protecting shade,
 Are wreck'd and buried in the common ruin.
 When therefore, though from far, the shepherd hears
 Wild War, with desolation in his train,
 Come pouring onward to o'erwhelm his country,
 The pastoral pipe thrown down, his pulse beats high,
 The voice of Glory calls aloud to arms,
 And forth he rushes to oppose their fury.

CHRISTINA.

CHRISTINA.

O name not Glory! she's my hated rival,
 And seeks to win thee from these longing arms.
 And yet I lov'd her once—and still have hail'd her,
 Oft as with laurel'd brow she hath return'd thee,
 Fresh from the field of Fame, to Edward's court;
 For then methought she rais'd thee nearer to me.
 But now with cruel and relentless hand
 She takes, she tears thee from me; and again
 Helpless thou leav'st me to my widow'd woes.

HAROLD.

The hart who pants beneath the noontide sun,
 When first he meets the cool refreshing stream,
 With less reluctance might be turn'd aside,
 Than I from thee.

EDITHA.

But when our Country call,
 Friend, Sister, Parent, Wife, and all in one,
 What fond allurements may detain thy steps?
 What equal claims demand thy pow'rful aid?

HAROLD.

By Heav'n! not all her sweet bewitching charms,—
 And surely all that grace the sex are met
 In her—not all that love which did bestow
 A crown and empire on me;—more than both,—
 Which gave these matchless beauties to my arms;
 Shall e'er with-hold me from the sacred call
 Of Honour and my Country.—No, Christina,
 Close as thou clingest to me, and dost hold me
 Fast by the heart-strings, I would tear them all,
 And rush to die, or to preserve her freedom.

D 2

CHRISTINA.

CHRISTINA

There, there—thou giv'st my heart a double wound;
 For should'st thou fall,—the Tyrant, should he conquer,—
 O think what follows!

EDITHA

Unhappy, virtuous pair!

Too intimate my bosom feels your woes;—
 O be your sorrows sacred!

SCENE THE THIRD.

HAROLD, CHRISTINA.

HAROLD.

Think what follows!

Ha! What?

CHRISTINA.

Alas! thy mind seems much disturb'd;—

Yet think—insulting from the sanguine field,
 Should a proud, lawless Conqueror advance,
 Whose arrogant pretensions claim my love—

HAROLD.

Thy love was free,—and thou didst freely give it,
 All, all to me:—the tyrant cannot force it:
 And for a deed the most profane and horrid—
 O who shall dare to rouse the sleeping thunder!

CHRISTINA.

Thou know'st the bold ambition of the foe,
 All decent form and circumstance unheeded,

Which

Which still would grasp the sceptres of the earth.
 Then think thou seest me led a struggling victim,
 Perhaps to that fair altar where I pledg'd
 My first,—my everlasting love to thee.—

HAROLD.

The vision crowds too pow'rful on my mind:
 Yes, I do see thee, dragg'd by ruffian hands,—
 All pale and breathless, dragg'd to hated nuptials,
 To vows thy chaste and purer soul abhors—
 O spare my aching sight!

CHRISTINA.

In vain I call

On Heav'n, and every pitying Saint above;
 For Heav'n reserves its wrath to after-times:
 In vain do I implore all human aid,
 While with stern eyes my sufferings are beheld:
 No friendly arm dares interpose to save me;
 For thou, my dear defence, art lost for ever.

HAROLD.

Thy dreadful words do harrow up my soul:
 O I am stung to madness!—Yes, Tyrant, yes,
 An injury intended is begun;
 And ere thy horrid purpose be effected,
 I will have such revenge!—myriads shall bleed
 For thy untam'd ambition.—What, might not all
 My wealth and honours satisfy its craving?
 Not this rich isle that brightens to the sun,
 And shines a jewel in the world's great circle?
 Not all its sturdy swains and blooming virgins?
 Its lowing herds, and fleecy flocks, that feed

On

On hill or dale? but thou wouldst snatch this lamb,
 This little lamb, which lives but in my bosom,
 A bleeding sacrifice to lust and tyranny?

CHRISTINA.

What have I done? O I have gone too far!
 I fought but to excite thy tenderness
 To stay with me, and leave the chance of war
 To lives less precious,—and I've rous'd thy rage;—
 While hot and eager for the dreadful conflict,
 The wrath I've kindled hurries thee along,
 And leaves me trembling, dying for thy safety.

HAROLD.

Yes, my Christina, I am weak indeed,
 Weaker than female fear, when thou'rt in danger:
 But am I so far fall'n, that thou shouldst think
 I would expose my faithful, valiant friends,
 To dangers that I dare not look upon,
 And hide myself with women? There's not a life,
 In all yon host, less precious than my own.
 Thou art my Wife,—are they not all our Children?
 Their Parents, let us love them while we live,
 And dying, bear their blessings to the skies.

CHRISTINA.

Forgive the feelings of too fond an heart,
 Which loves thy fame, yet dearer holds thy safety.—
 Yes, they are all our children, our cause is mutual;
 Not one among yon thousands but doth know it;
 Doth know—on his decisive sword, this day
 Depend his Sov'reign's fate, and Country's freedom.
 Then go, my Hero, greatly go thou forth;

Arm'd

Arm'd in thy lovely terrors, charge the foe;
 Like the Archangel, tread Ambition down,
 E'en to the center,—that the rescu'd world
 May hail thy fortune;—then to these happy arms
 Fondly return with victory and peace.

H A R O L D.

'Twas nobly said!—there fell the haughty Norman.
 What power inspires thy tongue with eloquence,
 That thou canst thus depress, or elevate,
 The subject spirit with so sweet controul?
 Strait let me hasten to my friends in arms;
 The glowing ardor which my breast hath caught,
 Spreading from man to man, shall swift inspire
 The drowsy soldier with a new-born vigour,
 And make him anxious for returning day.

C H R I S T I N A.

But sure 'tis long ere yet the ruddy morn
 Shall climb the mountain tops.—The stars, night-watching,
 Nor yet an hour have fill'd the twinkling sky.
 And wilt thou go so soon?—but promise first,
 When thou hast set the battle in array,
 That I shall once more see thee,—take one more
 Embrace,—then give thee to the care of Heav'n.

H A R O L D.

Hardy and vigilant, each noble chief
 Now occupies his post;—it ill becomes
 A Leader thus to loiter long behind.
 Farewel!—While yet the dusky veil of night
 Hangs o'er our heads, I will again behold thee.

C H R I S T I N A.

Till then, farewell!—good Angels ever guard thee!

SCENE THE FOURTH.

HAROLD, STIGAND.

Long health and peaceful days await my Sov'reign!
May glory still invest his righteous crown,
Here and hereafter!

Of holy men are surely heard in heav'n's courts,
But how is this?—Methinks thy rev'rend age,
Oppress'd with much fatigue, might claim repose.

The mind that weighs the high and heavy woes
Impending, which would sink our Church and State,
Finds little rest.—Thy humble headman ever,
Late as I counted o'er my rosary,
An holy Monk, Superior of his order,
From yon fair Abbey, near the Norman camp,
Did crave admittance on my privacy.

Doubtless the matter is of dear importance,
Which at this hour hath brought him forth so far.

STIGAND.

CHRISTIAN.

STIGAND.

He comes, as well may suit his sacred function,
The messenger of peace; and in his breast
Bears terms he would communicate to me;
But not without some warrant of permission.
Would I presume to hearken to his errand.

HAROLD.

But, good my Lord, know'st thou this holy Monk?
Comes he on fair and open embassy,
The messenger of peace? or may't not be,
His rev'rend garb conceals a trait'rous spy?

STIGAND.

No trait'rous spy, I do believe, he comes;
For he is much esteem'd an holy man;
But, urg'd by fair benevolence and love
To human kind, he sought this gracious office.

HAROLD.

Benevolence and love to human kind
Require that he be heard.—To thee, my Lord,
And to thy wisdom, I refer the business;
And may it prosper in thy hand!—Mean while
I must to th' camp, to make due preparation;
For with an enemy in arms, 'tis right
To treat at the sword's length.—The faithful Edwin,
Who here holds guard, will bring to me report
Of the result and sum of your proceedings.
Farewell!—I shall give order that the Monk
Attend thee strait, and also that safe conduct
With honour do return him whence he came.

E

STIGAND.

THE ARDALT D.

STIGAND.

In peace, or war, prosperity be with thee!

SCENE THE FIFTH.

STIGAND.

O Thou, great arbiter of peace and war,
Whose awful will decides the fate of empires,
Protect this virtuous Prince, and aid thy servant
In this great work—to reconcile the claims
Of rival Kings—to still the voice of War—
To give these hapless plains, yet drench'd in blood,
The blessings of repose;—then take me hence
To everlasting rest.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

STIGAND, MONK.

STIGAND.

Hail to thee, Father,
Auspicious harbinger, whose kindly zeal,
Through perils of the night and wakeful war,
Hath led thee to prepare the paths of peace:

MONK.

To England's rev'rend Primate health and peace!
So sends great Normandy;—whose gen'rous mind
With pity views the dire calamities

Which

A TRAGEDY.

25

Which bloody war still brings on this fair realm,
And wishes to restore its dear repose.

STIGAND.

In wisdom hath the Duke appointed thee
His peaceful minister, whose cordial love,
And filial piety to either country,
Should feel the horrors which afflict them both,
And bid thee strive to heal their bleeding wounds.

MONK.

Much for my native country do I suffer,
For weeping Normandy, whose val'rous prince,
And noblest progeny, now stand expos'd
To all the perils of advent'rous war.
Nor less for this afflicted land I feel,
Where planted by the grace of pious Edward,
Who view'd the sister nations still as one,
Long since I am adopted to her bosom,
And bear her filial reverence and love.

STIGAND.

The King, the tender father of his people,
Who knows no glory but their happiness,
To me hath giv'n the willing work of peace,
And bids the business prosper in my hands.

MONK.

Howe'er unequal to the weighty purpose,
The cause I agitate shall give me favour,
And I will simply offer my commission.
First then, as first beseems, the pious Duke,
In veneration of that sanctity

E 2

Which



HAROLD,

Which dignifies thy high and holy station,
Commends him to thy pray'rs, with solemn pro
That with the sov'reign Pontiff he will plead
Those privileges of the English church,
So rightly claim'd, which Stigand holds most dear.
Nor doubts he, from the apostolic justice,
To vindicate alone this welcome grace,
But to obtain such honours to thy person,
The Roman purple, and the Legate's power,
Which thy great predecessors oft have worn,
And thy superior virtues long have claim'd.

STIGAND.

I value as I ought his princely favour;
But for the splendid honours thou display'st,
Already rais'd above my humble worth,
I bend beneath a weight of pomp and cares,
Nor other glories seek, save those in heav'n.
Yet shall my voice applaud this piety,
Which seeks the peace and welfare of our Church,
And would preserve her rights.

MONK.

This piety
Must sanctify his cause; and loudly claims
The honest efforts of our holy zeal.
The late most venerable King, who sway'd
The sceptre of this realm, well nigh extinct
His ancient line, among the neighb'ring States
Did seek a Prince most worthy, who should wed
The Heiress of his throne, and wear his crown:
When first of many noble rivals stood
Th' illustrious Normandy,—to whom, as ablest,

By

By wisdom and by valour to controul
 The fiery spirits of contending peers,
 And rule his orphan realm in peace and glory,
 The pious Monarch, with parental care,
 Betroth'd the Princess, e'en the fair Christina.

S T I G A N D.

The full concurrence of a nation's voice
 Did meet the virtuous wishes of the Queen,
 And freely rais'd a wife and valiant Prince,
 As noble as the Norman, to the throne;
 Who reigns the guardian of their liberties,
 And will defend the honour of his crown.

M O N K.

He reigns,—but perjur'd and accurs'd he reigns.
 Th' ambitious Harold, who had dar'd prefer
 His haughty suit, e'en to the Princess' ear,
 Scar'd at his own presumption, soon withdrew;
 And while an honour'd guest at William's court,
 By a most solemn and tremendous oath,
 Sworn on an altar, whose dread womb conceal'd
 The holy relics of our saints and martyrs,
 Renounc'd his claim both to the crown and her.

S T I G A N D.

No honour'd guest, but shipwreck'd on his shore,
 Drawn by the wily Norman to his court,
 He there was held a splendid prisoner.
 The oath, with many an awfull rite impos'd,
 Compell'd he took, to break from hopeless bondage.
 From that dire oath, with all its train of ills,
 Black Perjury's train, he stands absolv'd by me.
 The evil rest on other heads than his!

M O N K.

MONK.

Yet by the dreadful sentence of that voice,
Which speaks the will of Him who rules above,
Cut off from all communion with the faithful,
He lives a wretched out-cast from the earth.
No due allegiance may be paid his power,
Or royalty usurp'd:—the nation's choice,
Void in itself, for ever stands annull'd;
And this fair realm, by him who holds from Heav'n
The kingdoms of the earth, is justly giv'n,
With reservation of his sacred rights,
To valiant and victorious Normandy.

STIGAND.

Ill doth this errand suit thy sacred function.
Thou still hast borne a virtuous name; but zeal,
Mistaken zeal, hath turn'd thy steps aside
From loyalty to treason.—Go in peace.—
Tell him who sent thee, Stigand's breast is steel'd
Against the arts of flattery or ambition,
Nor knows a wish beyond his Country's welfare.
Could aught my pow'rs avail, to reconcile
Contending chiefs, and give the nations peace,
It were an office Angels might delight in;
Would cheer my heart, and crown my age with glory.
But let the Duke think nobler of his servant,
Than that he'll e'er desert the paths of honour,
And stain an honest fame with fraud and faction.
The guard awaits thee.—Hence!—depart in safety.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE THE FIRST.

Morcar's Tent on the Lawn, near the Wood.

HAROLD, MORCAR.

HAROLD.

SUCH was his secret charge, brought to our ear
By faithful Edwin, from the good Archbishop,
As late from watch to watch we pass'd along,
Cheering the weary soldier's vigilance.

MORCAR.

Are these the Ministers, and these the terms,
Sent by great Normandy to England's Peers?
Shame on th' ignoble sender!

HAROLD.

This act, my friend,
Which marks the Tyrant's purpose, deep, determin'd,
Cancels all hope of peaceful compromise.
The gen'ral tenor of this embassy
Our noble Chiefs have heard, and by our summons
Do haste to meet us.

MORCAR.

Their fiery spirits soon
Will flame with fierce revenge.

HAROLD.

H A R O L D.

The drowsy night

Yet slumbers on the mountains.—O sleep on!
 For when thou wakest, many a wretch shall sleep
 To wake no more.—Curs'd, O curs'd ambition!
 The brave shall bleed, and many a tender tie
 Of cordial union rudely be dissolv'd,
 While parents, orphans, widows, weep in vain.

M O R C A R.

The common Father thou, thou feel'st for all.
 'Tis ours to feel for thee, and for Christina.

H A R O L D.

O Morcar! wherefore touchest thou that chord?
 In unison it vibrates with my heart,
 And still augments its trembling.—There was a time
 When Love did nerve this arm, and fire this heart
 To deeds of desp'rate daring.—But that love
 Was selfish, mean—its sweet rewards in view;
 My life the worthless pledge engag'd against them:
 While now Christina's happiness depends
 On one eventful cast;—and, oh! I find
 The gage too precious to be lost for ever.

M O R C A R.

Alike thy words awake each tender thought,
 Which, peaceful, should have slept within this bosom.
 Yes, Harold, I have lov'd—and my fond love
 Hath outliv'd hope;—yet till this hour, my soul
 Ne'er knew with how much tenderness it loves.

H A R O L D.

A TRAGEDY.

HAROLD.

O thou dissembler! how hast thou with-held -
So dear a secret from this faithful breast?
Yet pour into my heart thy tender tale;
For what so sweet as sympathy in love!
Who is this lovely fair-one? in what safe
Retreat hast thou dispos'd her? Say, where is she?

MORCAR.

Loft to these arms for ever.—Yet sure in heav'n
I may again behold her.

HAROLD.

Cruel Morcar!

Alas! my wounds requir'd some lenient touch,
And thou hast prob'd them with a barbed arrow.
They bleed afresh,—for thee, my friend, they bleed;
Half of thy heart malignant Fate hath slain;
Thou must,—thou must be wretched.

MORCAR.

Sad severity!

I know it all—and am content to suffer.
Like some poor savage, in whose panting breast
The hunter leaves his dart, I long to find
The friendly gloom of peaceful solitude,
And lay me down to die.

HAROLD.

F

SCENE

H A R O L D,

SCENE THE SECOND.

HAROLD, GURTH, LEWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN,
RANULPH, and other English Lords.

H A R O L D.

But soft, my friend!

Our noble Peers approach.—Methinks I mark
A frown indignant on each patriot brow.—
Welcome, my Lords:—we much do stand in need
Of your most sage advice; and as you've known
The cause on which we meet, doubtless you come,
With judgements cool, prepar'd to offer it.
But first—'twere not superfluous to premise,
That union in the council and the field,—
Alike propitious to the general safety;—
Union alone can brighten our renown.

G U R T H.

The trusty messenger whom thou didst charge,
In haste to call us to thy kingly presence,
Having, by thy command, in part inform'd us
Of the vile Monk's insidious embassy,
Hither we bring, as dutious faith requires,
Our counsel and our lives, to aid thy service.

H A R O L D.

Heav'n still be thank'd, and you, my noble Friends!
Howe'er by pow'rful enemies assail'd,
Your loyalty and valour shall support me:
Nor let me seem to boast, when I refer you

Each

Each to himself, if aught I have with-held
 Of honour due to your exalted merits.
 Yet,—for I know that Kings are fallible,—
 If I have so far err'd, my heart disclaims
 Th' unkind intent,—and throbbing thus, pours forth
 Its warmth, its tenderness, its love, to all.

MORCAR.

We know thy heart benevolent as nature;
 Warm as the sun, and genial as the earth.

EDWIN.

Heav'n needs not sacrifice, nor virtue praise;
 Yet might it seem invidious, not to give
 Virtue its just encomium.

HAROLD.

Yes, my Lords,
 You are the high-born kinsmen of my Throne;
 One family, our fortunes are the same;
 And sure a fair inheritance is ours.
 But pow'rful Envy, with contracted brow,
 And eye malignant, scowls upon our State:
 While proud Ambition, with a Monarch's voice,
 Demands our homage.

LEWIN.

Let him speak in thunder,
 And we will bow to his puissant mandate.
 Mean while, our honour suffers in these parlies,
 And ardent pants for just and great revenge.

Nor comes this haughty spoiler to usurp
 The sov'reign State alone,—but with him comes,
 Black as a tempest, rolling from the south,
 A swarm of locusts, eager to invade
 Our fertile fields, and blast their vernal bloom.
 Each petty Chief, elate with pow'r and conquest,
 Will instant seize some fav'rite, fair domain,
 And riot in our spoils.

H A R O L D.

Say, good my Lords,
 The grateful homage, voluntary paid
 To me,—shall I relinquish to a Tyrant?
 Must I betray my subjects' confidence,
 And yield th' imperial sceptre they bestow'd
 To an Usurper's hand?—betray my love,—
 And render from these arms, albeit unworthy,
 The fairest bliss indulgent Heav'n e'er gave?

E D W I N.

O insolent pretensions!

H A R O L D.

Is there who owns
 The mystic pow'r of sweet, attractive beauty;
 The tender ties of chaste, connubial love;
 Or the kind yearnings of parental fondness;
 Who feels not now a Tyrant's ruthless hand
 Tug at his heart-strings? Will not each proud Prince,
 Leagu'd in the Norman's cause, like him pretend
 To some illustrious Dame, or noble Virgin,

Our

A TRAGEDY.

49

Our Country's pride; and ravish from our arms
Our sweetest blessing; or our dearest hope?

RANULPH.

Harold, our public rights, our private charities,
Our Wives, our Children, fortunes, lives, and honours;
All link'd with thine, must stand or fall together.

HAROLD.

Yet, valiant Friends, the flower of England's Peers,
Whose wisdom guided, and whose pow'r confirm'd
The public voice;—who call'd me forth to empire,
And bade me wear a crown;—at your high bidding,
As first I stepp'd into the vacant Throne;—
So your free voice, which speaks the sense of thousands,
Shall this day fix my fate, a King, or Subject.
Say that my Country's peace, my People's safety,
Say these require it,—the pride of royalty
I'll straight resign, nor wish to reign a day,—
An hour,—at the dear price of England's welfare.

GURTH.

Hear him, ye haughty rulers of the earth;—
And thou, proud Norman, tremble at his virtues!

RANULPH.

Thus summon'd, gracious Prince, thy faithful Peers,
With folded arms and bended knees, renew
Their homage and allegiance.—'Twas not alone
Thy high descent, the honours of thy race,
Thy large demesnes, thy potent, num'rous vassals,
But chief thy worth, thy talents form'd for empire,
Thy gallant spirit tried in deeds of arms,

Thy

HAROLD,

Thy gentle manners, wooing sweet obedience,
Induc'd, with one accord, these gen'rous Peers,
The royal line extinct, to look to thee,
The nation's hope, averse from foreign Lords.
Since which thy firm, but mild, impartial sway,
Fix'd fair and steadfast on the law's broad base,
Soft'ning severer Justice still with Mercy,
Hath won the Nobles and the Peoples loves,
And riveted so fast their fate with thine,—
No pow'r on earth can burst the bands asunder.

HAROLD.

My Lords, I fain would speak what my heart feels,
But words are weak.—Your homage thus renew'd,
Adds a still brighter jewel to my crown.
Supported by your wisdom and your valour,
Foremost I stand in England's righteous cause.
The times, indeed, are rude and boist'rous;
Dark, sanguine clouds hang heavy o'er our heads,
And the full storm will quickly burst upon us.
May Heav'n in mercy spare my faithful people—
My innocent people—though danger point
Its deadliest darts at this devoted head!

RANULPH.

Twice twenty years, my sov'reign Liege, this arm,
At Honour's call, hath wav'd its trusty sword,
Nor do I find it shorten'd or impair'd.
Its earlier service still my Country us'd,
And shall not miss its latest.

HAROLD.

Brave old man!
While yet a youthful candidate for fame,
I do

A TRAGEDY.

47

I do remember, fighting by thy side,
I've wept to emulate thy mightier valour.
Once more our country asks thy earnest aid;
Our wives, our virgins, lift th' imploring eye
By turns to Heav'n and us, and bid us save them
From slavery and dishonour.

RANULPH.

I have a Daughter—

HAROLD.

I have a Queen,—and we have all our Country.
The great, the general parent of us all,
Who, to her brave and loyal progeny
Now stretches forth her hands, and seems to shrink
At dread of desolation.

GURTH.

Nor has this parent
One son, I trust, of so degenerate blood,
Who would not draw his stout sword in her cause,
And with firm arm oppose the threat'ning foe.
But doth necessity impel us on
So hastily, with war-worn bands, though brave,
To charge an enemy, lusty and fresh,
And skill'd in all the discipline of war?
Is it expedient, 'gainst such desperate odds,
To hazard all that's dear,—when time and prudence
Must mend our chance?

HAROLD.

While yet the soldier feels
The glorious glow of recent victory,
Time seems propitious.

GURTH.

H A R O L D,

GURTH.

The time's indeed propitious.
Beneath the shade of night, from the wide plain,
Quickly withdraw your long-extended line.
These heights, this wood, afford a safe retreat,
Impregnable to thrice the Norman force.
The region all behind us is our own,
Whence we may draw supplies as we have need;
While soon the foe shall waste his narrow bounds.
And flee from famine to a nobler death
• By our victorious swords.

MORCAR.

This we may do

When vanquish'd.—

LEWIN.

Mean while, let us not damp

The noble ardor of our valiant troops
By ignominious flight.

GURTH.

Experience, late,

May teach us to affix to such proceeding
A term more honourable.

LEWIN.

Thou call'st it prudence.

The Norman gives to perfidy that name.

I like it not.—Soon as the orient sun

Shall gild the soldier's arms, with force entire

Attack th'insidious foe.—The sudden shock

Shall stagger his firm phalanx.—Boldly then

Press his disorder'd ranks, scattering confusion,

Horror,

A TRAGEDY.

49

Horror, and pale dismay among his host,
Till one wild rout ensue, and victory,
Enamour'd of our deeds, without a blush
Proclaim us for her minions.

RANULPH.

Methinks I feel

The mounting vigour of returning youth,
And long once more to stain this loyal sword
In the red blood of England's cruel foes.
Lead on—

LEWIN, EDWIN, &c.

Lead on—

MORCAR.

'Tis Harold and Christina.

HAROLD.

Let England be the word.—This gallant spirit
Inspires success.

GURTH.

I follow—yet I fear—

LEWIN.

Away with fear,—it is a vile disease;
Women and slaves contract it, and delight
To spread its foul contagion 'mong the healthy.

GURTH.

Say'st thou, rash youth!—But hold—thou art my Brother.

G

LEWIN

LEWIN.

'Tis false.—I do disclaim the title,—else
I too might fear.

GURTH.

He who with slanderous tongue
Dares to profane another's honest fame,
Dares what, I own, my nature shudders at.

H A R O L D.

Alas! my Brothers, are there no fitter courses,
Through which you might direct this fiery tide
To pour its fury?—Have we not foes enough,
'Gainst whom to turn your fierce, impetuous rage,
That thus you seek for fresh ones 'mongst yourselves?
Unnatural enmity! Brethren you are,
And must be Friends.

GURTH.

To none but England's foes
Am I a foe.—The man whom my warm heart
Held in its fond embraces as my friend,
May spurn me from him, and at one rude shock
Break ev'ry tender nerve of fond affection,—
Which, finer still than ether, are replete
With sense most exquisite;—nor yet for this
Shall deep revenge dwell rankling in my bosom,
An hell-born passion, foreign to my nature.
But, oh! these tend'rest and most sensible nerves,
Mangled and torn, will shrink at ev'ry touch,
And never—never can unite again.

H A R O L D.

A TRAGEDY.

51

HAROLD.

If nature hold no influence in your hearts,
I and your Country do but plead in vain.
Unhappy Country! who by foreign force
Affail'd, and rousing to put forth thy vigour,
Sudden perceiv'ft thy noble strength impair'd
By fell domestic feuds.

GURTH.

I pray you, Sir,
Lead on;—this heart, untainted yet with fear,
Beats high, and longs to shed its last best blood
In our dear Country's cause.—Mean while, this arm,
Rous'd by indignant rage, may act such things
As louder boasters shall behold with wonder.

HAROLD.

In Lewin's downcast eye and crimson cheek,
I read remorse and shame.—To rash offence
When sorrow's pang succeed, the gen'rous mind
Melts and relents.—Remember, O my Brothers,—
And you, my Lords, be mindful of the charge,
Next to the fav'ring providence of Heav'n,
On our firm union all that's dear depends;
Our lives, our laws, our sacred liberties;
The happiness of our posterity.—
In freedom born; we may in freedom die.
But O our children! do not let them curse us:
Groaning in chains, and flagrant from the scourge
Of tyranny, let them not curse their Fathers;
But as they pour their praises to the skies,
And hail those holy shades who died for freedom,

G 2

May

May some of that pure incense greet our ghosts,
Grateful amidst the happiness of Heav'n!

GURTH.

In this great cause our hearts can be but one.

HAROLD.

Then in good time each to his post repair.
Be vigilant;—and when the scattering stars
Begin to flee before th' approaching sun,
In fair array extend our gallant host,
And wait th' appointed signal,—which shall sound
A blast to sweep invasion from our coasts,
That Liberty and Peace henceforth may reign.

SCENE THE THIRD.

GURTH, LEWIN.

LEWIN.

He goes,—nor deigns to cast one look upon me.
O wretch! who could his gentle nature thus
Urge to such unkind conflict.—O my Brother!

GURTH.

Thou didst disclaim that title.—Hast thou aug-
To say, address thy speech as to a stranger,
And briefly;—I'm in haste.—

LEWIN.

Yes, I deserve

Thy

Thy keen contempt, thy most severe reproaches;
 And I will bear them all most patiently,—
 Nor ask forgiveness, till thy wrath hath rais'd them
 E'en to the very height of my offending.

GURTH.

I am not wont to deal in foul invectives,
 But think their malice best repaid with scorn.

LEWIN.

Despise me then,—yet pity me.—O Anger!
 How thy envenom'd shafts recoil, and wound
 The breast which harbours thee! I feel them now,
 They rankle at my heart.—The hand of Death
 May draw them thence, and rid me of these pangs.

GURTH.

Hark! hear'st thou not the cock, with clarion shrill,
 Proclaim th' approaching dawn? The time is come
 That we must part.—Farewell!—Thou know'st elsewhere
 Our presence is requir'd.

LEWIN.

Yes, we must part—
 Perchance to meet no more;—the battle soon
 Shall join in clashing arms:—there if this hot,
 Impetuous wretch should fall,—he who was once
 Thy Brother,—remember his sad penitence,
 And pardon all his frailties in his death.

GURTH.

This is too much.—O Nature! thou hast conquer'd.—
 Just Heav'n! can I behold a Brother's tears,

Flowing

Flowing to ask forgiveness, flow in vain?
 No,—thou art still my Brother. Come to my arms,
 Come to my heart,—and there once more assume
 Thy wonted seat;—for, oh!—believe me, Lewin,
 Short as it was, thy absence hath been painful.

LEWIN.

Again I live,—for I again enjoy
 A Brother's love.

GURTH.

Sweet plant of heav'nly birth,
 Whose tender leaves shrink at rude Anger's blast,
 But open to Affection's fostering ray!—
 The storm which seem'd to loosen thy firm roots,
 And bend thee to the earth, an wholesome gale,
 Hath serv'd to quicken all thy springs of life,
 And thou imbib'st fresh vigour at the heart.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE THE FIRST.

The Abbey.

STIGAND.

THE night protracts her slow and solemn march,
 As loath to usher in the morn, whose ray
 Must soon, in characters of blood, reveal
 Harold's and England's doom.—O thou Supreme!
 Avert the ills I fear.—The more my soul
 Revolves th' approaching crisis, the more dark
 And doubtful seems th' event.—On the King's life
 Hang all our hopes.—The pilot lost, the vessel,
 Whose helm will own no other hand than his,
 Abandon'd to the raging of the storm,
 Must split in pieces.—Could my thoughts divine—
 But soft—the King approaches.

SCENE THE SECOND.

HAROLD, STIGAND.

HAROLD.

Grateful, my Lord,

At this dread hour I meet, what most I wish'd,
 Thy patriot vigilance, dispos'd to share

The

The deep concerns which agitate the mind
Of envied royalty.

STIGAND.

Never shall sleep

Visit these eye-lids, while my Sov'reign wakes,
Oppress'd with anxious cares, less for a crown,
Than for his Queen and Country.

HAROLD.

Had ever prince

A friend like thee!—Thy pure unfulfilled worth
Around the mitre throws so bright a blaze,
That crowns look dim before it.—While I lean
Thus on thy bosom, let my heart to thine
Commit its counsels, weigh with equal poise
The vast event, now gathering like the tempest,
Ere long to burst with mine and England's fate.

STIGAND.

O Sir, unlock this secret hoard of care,
And let thy faithful servant share the burden.

HAROLD.

Thou know'st the Norman host is numerous, valiant,
A chosen set of warriors, hither led
In quest of fortune and a fairer feat,
Each victor's promis'd meed.—Our gallant troops
Match'd with those vet'ran bands, severe and fierce
Will be the conflict,—hard to tell th' event.
Should adverse fortune o'er my stars prevail,
And 'reave me of my crown and life,—for both
I've stak'd together,—next to our self in place,
Thy peaceful hands must catch the reins of empire,

And

A TRAGEDY.

87

And shield awhile, from William's pow'r and rage,
The weak defenceless realm.

STIGAND.

Must I survive

My Friends, my Sov'reign, and my fallen Country!
See her fair cities sack'd, her fields in blood!
Her laws, great Alfred's laws, which long have rul'd
These peaceful plains, resign their ancient seat
To the stern genius of the Norman policy,
And live myself its slave!

HAROLD.

Not so, my Friend;

Thou'lt live to save thy Country.—Thy fair fame,
Held in deep rev'rence through the land, will make
E'en the proud victor listen to thy voice,
And offer terms of peace and mild subjection;—
Terms which from Rome's rapacious hand shall guard
Our Church, from fierce despotic rule our State;—
Each by thy pious zeal preserv'd from vengeance.

STIGAND.

Thou gen'rous Prince! with mingled love and rev'rence
I gaze upon thee.—In this hour of trial,
Superior to each fortune, thy firm bosom
Feels not a pang, but for thy friends and country.
May Heav'n yet vindicate thy righteous cause,
And crown it with success!

HAROLD.

Doth Heav'n decree

That sacred Justice shall on earth decide
The differences of kings?

H

STIGAND.

THE SAINTS.

The Will Divine,

Which rules mysterious all our mortal fates,
 Which now exalts the tyrant,—how brings low
 The wise and good,—is Justice still, and Mercy,—
 To be ador'd, not fear'd,—tis ours to act
 Our parts aright,—the rest we leave to Heaven.

H A R O L D.

Thy words, blest sage, mild as the dew of morn,
 Dispel the gloom just gath'ring in my breast,
 And wrap it in an holy peaceful calm.
 Yet there is one,—one anxious care behind,—
 Which Wisdom's voice,—which fair Religion's strain,
 Would seek to soothe in vain.—O my Christina!
 Thy destiny, which hangs on this dread hour,
 Comes o'er me clad in every form of terror,
 And fills my soul with anguish.

S T I G A N D.

The Saints above,

Who know her matchless virtues, will protect her.

H A R O L D.

My love for her each nobler sense subdues.
 But late, encircled by my faithful peers,
 Tendering their solemn homage, and with high,
 Heroick zeal, demanding to be led
 Against the foe, I felt myself at once
 A soldier and a king.—Ent'ring these walls,
 A sudden chillness, thrilling through each vein,
 Seiz'd on my heart, and damp'd the sprightly flame
 Which fair Ambition, and my Country's wrongs,

Had

Had kindled in my bosom.—Thy cool wisdom,
Which feels not, will, I fear, condemn this weakness.

STIGAND.

Who shall condemn what Heav'n itself approves,
The sacred tie of chaste connubial love,
Its tender fears and sufferings? I love the name
Of Soldier, and of King;—but more I love
The milder virtues that adorn the Man.
I venerate thy sorrows;—they but show
A noble nature in thee.—Nor would this breast
Forego the soft anxiety it feels
For the Queen's safety, to possess whate'er
Unbounded pow'r could give to apathy.

HAROLD.

The Queen herself shall thank thee for this goodness.
But art thou not too gentle? Chide me rather,
That at this busy hour of preparation,
When either camp is rous'd, I leave my friends,
And fondly come to trifle with a woman.
Yet I did promise, while the veil of night
Hangs o'er our heads, that once more I would see her.
She comes.—O Stigand! save me from her charms,
Or wisdom, virtue, fame, will fade before them.

H 2

SCENE

HAROLD & EDITH.

SCENE THE THIRD.

HAROLD, CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND.

CHRISTINA.

Nay, good my Lord, turn not thine eyes away,
Nor thus unkindly shun me.—I do not come,
With ill-tim'd tenderness, to hang about thee,
And, weeping on thy bosom, strive to win thee
From Honour and thy Country;—no, I trust,
High Heav'n ordains thy gallant arm t' achieve
Our England's safety, and thine own renown:
Nor will I interpose aught but my pray'rs
To Heav'n for thy success.

HAROLD.

Ever most gracious!

The tutelar saint and guardian of thy realm!
If innocence and piety avail,
Sure Heav'n will hear thy pray'rs.—Indeed, my love,
I dreaded more a conflict with thy tears,
Than with the boasted numbers of the Norman.

EDITHA.

Within these hallow'd shades, where Sanctity
And Resignation meek, o'er the calm breast
Shed their mild influence, her tender bosom
Soon shall cast off its terrors.

CHRISTINA.

Yes, though so late
A sojourner within their peaceful bounds,

My

A TRAGEDY.

My soul assumes its colour from the scene,
And feels serenity unknown before.
Auspicious reign of holiness and peace!
I would we were their subjects, since that state
Is happier than our envy'd sov'ignty.

STIGAND.

Eternal Wisdom hath to each assign'd
His station in the world:—the good or evil.
He judgeth fitting to annex, 'tis ours
Patient to bear, or thankful to enjoy.
Thou art a king;—to thee high Heav'n entrusts
A nation's welfare.

HAROLD.

Yes, I am a king,
The first on earth, the sov'reign of a free
And virtuous people;—and I will perform
The duties of a king.—Yet, rev'rend Stigand,
Sure these, my Sister and my Wife, may claim
Their share of dear regard and just affection.—
O Editha!—O my Christina! take
A Brother's and an Husband's fond embrace.

CHRISTINA.

O my lov'd Lord! I know thy gentle heart
Melts at the sight of woe;—then do not strive,
With cruel tenderness, to wound the breast
Which these so holy and so rev'rend teachers
Have fought to arm with pious fortitude.

HAROLD.

My soul assumes its colour from the scene,
 Bless'd be their friendly zeal, and their kind
 Their kind instructions:—if they save thy bosom
 One tender pang, they merit every praise.

Alas!—I would this heart were firm as thine,
 But still I fear its weakness.

Bear in thy mind,
 The great, the glorious cause, in which we fight—
 A cause would render e'en the coward brave,
 And warm the valiant with heroic ardor.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

HAROLD, CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND,
 EDWIN.

Pardon, my Liege!—an hasty messenger
 Arrives to inform you of the foe's approach;
 Through yonder glade his fleet is seen in flames;
 As if the sun, wrapp'd in a pitchy cloud,
 Were rising in the south.—Either he holds
 His fortune desp'rate, or vainly counts
 On certain victory.

HAROLD.
 Presumptuous Tyrant!
 And art thou sure of conquest? haply this hand

May

A. T. R. A G. E. D. Y.

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May tear th' usurped laurel from thy brow.—
While gallant Morcar, on the rising lawn,
Skirted by this fair wood, holds his stout bands,
To aid the doubtful battle, or protect
This hallow'd residence; the faithful Edwin,
Should William's star o'er our fair rights prevail,
Waits with a chosen troop to bear you hence,
And lodge you safe in Julius' ancient towers.
One more, one more embrace;—and now farewell!
In Heav'n's propitious pow'r, and our good swords,
We trust.

CHRISTINA AND EDITHA.

Farewell!

STIGAND.

The God of battles lead you

To victory and peace!

SCENE THE FIFTH.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND.

CHRISTINA.

He goes—he's gone.

Vanish'd from these sad eyes,—when,—when again
Shall I behold him!—dreadful interval!
O for some opiate drug of potency
To lock up all my senses, till this hour
Of dark suspended horror be o'erpast!

Sure

Sure 'tis an age of woe! and yet, alas!

What ages may succeed!

STIGANDA

Look up to heav'n

Mark the mild blush upon the cheek of Hope

The fire seraphic beaming from the eye

Of bright Religion;—let their cheering ray

Illume thy darken'd soul.

CHRISTINA

Yes, I have sought

To raise my mind above the world, above

Its vanities, its miseries;—but, oh!

My Harold clings so closely to my soul,

He draws it back, he fixes it to earth,

And vain are all its struggles to be free.

EDITHA.

Thou yet art young in stern Affliction's school,

And all untutor'd by Adversity;

Mistress severest, best;—whose rigid tongue

Teacheth the subject soul to know herself;

To know her own high dignity and worth;

Till conscious now she soars above the stars,

And looking down upon this wretched world,

Views all the mighty bubbles men have rais'd,

Kingdoms and empires, vanish from its surface;

While she herself, native of Heav'n, remains

Immortal and unchang'd.

CHRISTINA.

A TRAGEDY.

63

CHRISTINA.

Kingdoms or empires
I could resign, nor breathe one sorrowing sigh:
But what are crowns and empires to an heart
So fix'd, so fond as mine?—To cease to love,
Were but to cease to be.—Yet now, e'en now,
O my lov'd Lord, how did this soul assume
A cold tranquillity! Yet that was love.
And now again 'twere worth the price of worlds,
To hold him here, and clasp him to my heart.
But hark!—I hear the signal of assault.—
Death strikes his tenfold shield, and through the woods
The dreadful clangor rings.—A thousand darts
Assail my hero's breast;—a thousand faulchions
Blaze round his helm.—O for a giant's arm,
A giant's shield, broad as the full-orb'd moon,
To bear before him!

STIGAND.

If Heav'n approve his cause,
A mightier arm, a mightier shield defends him.
Hope humbly then; distrust not, nor presume.
Presumption wrests from Providence its pow'r,
While pale Distrust that pow'r would fain deny.
Shall not his justice equal vengeance take
For equal crimes?

CHRISTINA.

The love-lorn nightingale,
Who saw the ruthless falcon tow'ring nigh,
Missing her mate upon the wonted thorn,
Nocturnal chants her sweet melodious moan
To the high ear of Heav'n:—so innocent,

I

Though

Though inharmonious, are the simple strains
That wail my absent love.

STIGAND.

Think not, fair mourner,

I mean to chide thy sorrows.—When high Heav'n
Launches his awful terrors through the world,
E'en Innocence must tremble.—Nature then
Teaches her various offspring to bewail
Their helpless state, and with unceasing moan,
To deprecate the dangers which they dread:
But grief must know its bounds.—High Heav'n requires—

CHRISTINA.

O that his potent and all-healing word
Would bid these terrors cease;—bid peace, and joy,
And Harold be restor'd!

EDITHA.

O wait, my Sister,

With meek submission wait the great event,
Which soon may prove propitious to thy wishes:
But let not us presume to point the means
By which unerring Wisdom shall produce
Th' events its will decrees; for oft we dread
Destruction from the storm, whose furious blast
Bids rage awhile the jarring elements,
Only to give them peace.

STIGAND.

Should the King perish;

Should this fair land be doom'd to groan for years
In basest bondage,—from this abject state

The

A TRAGEDY.

67

The hand of Heav'n at length may set her free,
And raise her to the highest point of greatness,
The Queen of Nations, at whose righteous throne
The world shall seek for justice.

CHRISTINA.

Gracious Heav'n!

Shall Harold perish, whom thy mighty arm
Hath plac'd on high, thine own Vice-gerent here,
And giv'n this favour'd people to his sway?
Shall he be doom'd to death, and they to bondage?

EDITHA.

The matin hour draws nigh.—

CHRISTINA.

Then let us haste

To supplicate that Pow'r who rules the fate
Of nations, and of kings.—

EDITHA.

Yes, we will haste;

Nor our accustom'd rites alone perform,
But ev'ry act of sad solemnity.
Call forth the minist'ring Priests, in flowing robes
Of innocent white;—call forth the hallow'd band
Of heav'n-devoted Virgins;—let them pass,
In slow procession, through the cloister'd ailes;
At ev'ry holy altar let them pause;
On bended knee kiss ev'ry sacred shrine,
And each propitious Saint devout implore.

STIGAND.

Marshall'd in order meet, the solemn march
 Ourselves will lead, and ev'ry holier rite,
 To high religious office that pertains,
 Reverent perform. More sweet than frankincense,
 From golden censers wafted to the skies,
 Do pray'rs and sighs of penitence ascend;
 In volumes fraught with purer fragrance roll,
 And penetrate and fill th' eternal dome
 With grateful odours fresh.—High Heav'n, appeas'd,
 May lend an ear propitious to our pray'rs.

CHRISTINA.

Yet, pious Prelate, teach thy poor penitent,
 What acts of rigorous penance best may speak
 Her deep contrition; say, what deeds of alms,
 What holy things she may perform, to Heav'n
 Most acceptable;—and let ev'ry Saint,
 And ev'ry Angel, hear the solemn vow—
 Whate'er thy sacred sentence shall decree,
 With awful reverence and submission meek
 Shall be fulfill'd.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND, EDWIN.

STIGAND.

Surely thy hasty step,
 And quick, impatient eye, bring happy tidings.

CHRISTINA.

A TRAGEDY.

69

CHRISTINA.

O declare them—

EDWIN.

They flee—

CHRISTINA.

Alas! Who flee?

EDWIN.

The Normans flee—

CHRISTINA.

How fares the King?—

EDWIN.

He lives,—

He triumphs.—

CHRISTINA.

O 'tis too exquisite!—This heart

Will burst with extasy.—

EDWIN.

Illustrious Queens,

Pardon my zeal, which in the dawn of vict'ry

Flew to salute you with the earliest tidings,

And rudely thus intrudes into your presence.

CHRISTINA.

Thrice welcome, noble Edwin:—yet proceed—

Where did you leave the King? Returns he hither,

Or

Or at the head of his victorious troops,
Follows the fugitives?

EDWIN.

The gallant Lewin
Pursues the fleeing foe.

CHRISTINA.

I pray thee, Earl,
Each turn of war, and circumstance relate,
Which put the Norman to this sudden flight.

EDWIN.

At th' end of yonder glade, that opening views
The distant plain, I held appointed guard,
What time the orient Sun, darting his beams
On ev'ry burnish'd helm, glorious display'd
Th' array of either host. With measur'd step
I mark'd each frowning line advance:—they met;—
And these wide woods resounded the loud shock.
Doubtful awhile the fullen battle bled,
Till mighty Harold, like the chafed boar,
Rousing his dreadful vigour, broke the ranks
That held him close at bay.—Instant they fled,
And as the hare-hound swift, Lewin pursues.

CHRISTINA.

Thanks, faithful Edwin, for thy welcome tale.

EDWIN.

May ev'ry hour of your long life, like this,
Be fortunate! Humbly I take my leave;—
The duty of my station strait reclaims me.

CHRISTINA.

A TRAGEDY.

71

CHRISTINA.

Gentle my Lord, farewell!

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND.

EDITHA.

And now, my Friends,
Still shall our high and holy rites proceed,
Changing the sad solemnity of sorrow
To festal pomp sublime. Triumphal hymns,
Swelling with choral symphonies, shall raise
The raptur'd soul above the starry sphere,
E'en to the foot of Heav'n's eternal throne.

STIGAND.

There pure devotion meets with equal grace,
Wrapp'd in the simple strains of human praise,
Or bursting from the Seraph's lip of fire.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE THE FIRST.

The Abbey.

STIGAND.

IS it some vain illusion of the mind
That still with terror shakes this aged frame,
Or were such wonders real?—Alas! our senses
Too plain perceiv'd the fearful prodigy,
When, instant as the pealing anthems clos'd,
A thousand lightnings flash'd, and sudden thunders
Roll'd through the clear blue sky. The shrines and altars
Trembled,—and all this consecrated pile
Shook to its base.—Devotion, struck with horror,
Could only clasp the hands and lift the eye,—
Nor even cry God save us!—

SCENE THE SECOND.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND, Two of the
Sisters.

CHRISTINA.

Wretch that I am,
Ah! whither do you lead me?—A sea of blood
Foams all before us;—yet another step—

And

And we are lost for ever.—Ha!—I see
 My Harold floating on the crimson billows.
 He sinks—he's gone—and now the swelling tide
 Comes rushing onward—and o'erwhelms us all.

EDITHA.

She faints—she falls—support her, gentle Sisters.
 Our holy rites with wond'rous omens close;
 Heav'n only knows if adverse or propitious.

STIGAND.

Were time and circumstance less full of fate,
 Such strange alarms of nature well might shock
 A firmer disposition.

EDITHA.

See, she moves!—
 Her spirits come again;—and now less wild
 She looks around.

CHRISTINA.

Alas!—where have I been?
 What dreadful horrors have I just escap'd?
 And am I thus?—And do we all survive?—
 We do;—and more substantial woes remain.

EDITHA.

Heav'n hath restor'd her senses.—She's recover'd.—
 Sisters, you may retire.

K

SCENE

SCENE THE THIRD.

CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND.

CHRISTINA.

Tell me, my Friends,—

You, who 'midst direful prodigies, possess'd
 Your nobler minds serene,—since Edwin left us,
 Hath aught of moment reach'd us from the King?

STIGAND.

No tidings have arriv'd;—yet, by conjecture,
 We're taught to hope for prosp'rous events:
 The distant din of arms, remoter roll'd,
 No longer trembles on the list'ning ear.

CHRISTINA.

Hence you infer the vanquish'd foe still flees,—
 And Harold, led by victory, pursues.
 Yet wherefore comes no speedy messenger,
 With joyful greetings, to confirm our hopes?—
 But hark!—I hear from far the shouts of triumph:
 Some sudden gale propitious wafts them to us:
 Soon shall my Hero come.

EDITHA.

Mean while, let us
 Retire, our troubled spirits to compose,
 And with calm joy prepare our hearts to meet him.

SCENE

SCENE THE FOURTH.

STIGAND.

'Tis well—retire;—for doubtful terror seems
 To ride on ev'ry wind.—What sounds confus'd,
 Hoarse murmurs of distress and clamours shrill,
 Mixt with the din of clashing arms, approach!—
 The bloody tide of battle sure is turn'd,
 And this way rolls its course.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

STIGAND, EFFRED.

STIGAND.

Ha!—What art thou,
 Whose looks, so wan and wild, increase my fears,
 And freeze my blood with horror?—Yes, I read
 The dreadful tidings which thou canst not utter,—
 The King is dead—and England is no more—

EFFRED.

Indeed, my Lord, I bring a tale of woe.—
 The battle's lost, and many a noble chief
 Strews the coarse ground;—but still the King survives,
 And by prevailing legions though oppress'd,
 Slowly retires to meet his main reserve,
 Who fresh, undaunted, hasten to support him.
 Indignant oft he turns upon the foe,

K 2

And

And oft he makes the stoutest ranks recoil;
 Maintaining thus a desp'rate fight, till join'd
 By gallant Morcar, they may fruit regain
 These fav'ring heights, our scatter'd force collect,
 And hold the conqu'ring enemy at bay.

STIGAND.

O sad reverse of fortune!—Late we learnt
 The King prevail'd.—Yet say, what accident
 Produc'd this fatal change?

EFFRED.

The foe did flee,
 In wild disorder flee,—and victory,
 Infidious, seem'd to hover o'er our arms.
 Yet was their flight but feign'd, to draw us on,
 Quitting th' advantage of our chosen ground,
 And negligent of order, to pursue them.
 When, practis'd in each stratagem of war,
 Sudden they turn'd, and forming quick their ranks,
 Affail'd our force, irregular and broken.
 Ill-fated Prince! precipitate and rash,
 Whose headlong ardour led the hot pursuit,
 Here fell the valiant Lewin.

STIGAND.

To distant times
 His virtues be remember'd;—but let death
 In dark oblivion shroud his gen'rous failings.

EFFRED.

The rigid conflict long did he sustain,
 Breathless and wounded,—till the gallant Gurth

Espied

A TRAGEDY.

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Espied th' unequal strife, and flew to save him.
 Afresh the battle rag'd;—when his broad shield
 Thrown wide to cover Lewin as he lay,
 A sharp spear pierc'd the side of noble Gurth.—
 On Lewin's breast he fell, and kiss'd his wounds.—
 With dying efforts tenderly they strove
 T' exchange a faint embrace;—mingled a sigh,—
 And silent in each other's arms expir'd.

STIGAND.

This piteous tale, down the rough soldier's cheek
 Draws honest tears;—and yet I cannot weep.
 Stubborn old-age!—hast thou no tears to give?
 Ah! no:—or if thou hadst—this horrid fight
 Would stop their course—and turn thee into stone.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

HAROLD, STIGAND, EEFRED. Soldiers bearing
 HAROLD.

HAROLD.

Here, fellow-soldiers, set me down, and leave me:
 To noble Morcar hasten your return:—
 With matchless conduct shall he lead you on,
 To seize revolted Victory, and bind her
 To your banners.—Be faithful still, and valiant—
 So farewell!

SCENE

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

HAROLD, STIGAND, EFFRED.

HAROLD.

My wounds, I feel, are fatal.—

A soldier in the well-fought field should die;
 But here must end at once my life and reign,
 Though short, not all inglorious.—To thee, my Lord,
 To thee, and to thy friendship, I confide
 My soul's eternal peace.—Each holier rite,
 Each solemn sacrifice our Church ordains,
 Thy pious charity will see perform'd,
 To give my poor departed spirit rest.

STIGAND.

A life like thine, mark'd with each worthy deed
 That best becomes the monarch and the man,
 Is more than sacrifice.—Yet, ev'ry rite
 Our holy Church enjoins shall be perform'd,
 With many a pious pray'r,—of prevalence
 To ope the gates of mercy.

HAROLD.

Still there are cares,
 Unfinish'd cares,—my Country and my Queen,—
 Which call upon me.

STIGAND.

Living or dying,
 Thou art our guardian genius.—O devise,

And

A . T R A G E D Y .

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And prompt the means, if any such there be,
That yet may save our country.—But, alas!
Where is the human fortitude, in pain,
In torture,—when with tend'rest apprehensions
The mind is rack'd,—which coolly can conceive,
And dictate in this deep perplexity?

H A R O L D .

By this, I trust, Earl Morcar hath secur'd
Possession of the hills, and planted there
The royal standard.—Thither will repair
The scatter'd remnants of our gallant army,
With all that's brave of England.—Effred, thou,
Whose valour and fidelity so oft
In perils have been prov'd, must haste thee to him.
Command him in thy dying Sov'reign's name,
His utmost force collected, not to hazard
Another battle,—but protract the war
With cautious conduct,—while this rev'rend Prelate,
Our sagest counsellor, shall strive to gain
Terms, not ignominious, from the victor.
Be speedy, and be secret.

E F F R E D .

I obey.

SCENE

HAROLD.

SCENE THE EIGHTH.

HAROLD, STIGAND.

STIGAND.

'Tis said the Norman's nature is severe
And harsh:—such then we must expect the terms
To be accorded.

HAROLD.

There's the wound that flays me.

O my People! children of my affection!—
The subjects only of parental sway!—
Must you be doom'd to fear a foreign frown?
To tremble at the voice of Tyranny,
And yield obedience to his iron rule?
From fire to son accustom'd to be free,
Must you now bend beneath the Norman yoke,
And drag a miserable life along,
Preserv'd to propagate a race of slaves?
How shall your offspring, children yet unborn,
Complain aloud their ancestors were cowards,
And curse their base hereditary bondage!

STIGAND.

Not links of iron long can hold the man
Determin'd to be free.—In spite of fortune
Freedom remains.—Immortal as she is,
She cannot die.

HAROLD.

A TRAGEDY.

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HAROLD.

But she may be disgrac'd.—
O save me from the vision!—Sure I see
Her modest head declin'd upon her breast,
The faded form of gracious Liberty
Chain'd to the victor's car, and royal dames,
And noble virgins in vile fetters follow.
Ha!—my Christina!—O detested triumph!
Spare, Tyrant, spare her lovely tenderness;
Respect her dignity, revere her virtue;
The mother of a nation, and my Queen,—
My chaste—my spotless wife.

SCENE THE NINTH.

HAROLD, CHRISTINA, EDITHA, STIGAND,
Two of the Sisters.

CHRISTINA.

My much-lov'd Lord,
My husband!—wounded and bleeding!—O stand off,
And let me fly to save him!

HAROLD.

That voice!—that form!—
Art thou Christina, or some ministr'ing Angel,
Who kindly hoverest round my drooping head,
To cheer my spirits at this hour of death?

L

CHRISTINA.

H A R O L D, A

CHRISTINA.

Talk not of Death—for I will hold thee from him;
 These arms shall hold thee—while with tears of balm
 I bathe thy wounds, and soften ev'ry anguish.

H A R O L D.

Yes, thou art Life and Health:—Pain, Sicknefs, Death,
 Vanish at thy approach.—Still, still I live,
 And am a Conqu'ror.—Charming Delusion!—
 Let me awhile enjoy it.—'Twill not be.—
 'Tis gone—and thou behold'st me here, Christina,
 A vanquish'd slave.—Alas! we all are slaves—
 Whom Nature form'd most free.—Thou, even thou,
 Twin Sister as thou seem'st of Liberty,
 With all that grace and dignity supernal,—
 Thou art a slave.—This unavailing arm
 Hath fail'd to save us.

CHRISTINA.

Yet hope survives in thee,
 And gilds the pitchy darkness of our fate
 With beams that usher in a brighter day.

H A R O L D.

'Tis but a transient meteor thou beholdest,
 Shining with faithless splendor to deceive thee.
 The star of hope is set to rise no more.
 My fondest cares for thee and for my country,
 From the sole death-bed that becomes a soldier,
 Have brought me hither.—O my happier Brothers,
 Glowing with glory, who in battle died,
 Nor felt your gen'rous blood grow cold!—I shudder.—
 This vital stream runs languid.—O Christina!

A few

A TRAGEDY.

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A few short moments more, and I must leave thee,
Fair and defenceless,—how divinely fair!—
A widow'd Queen.—

CHRISTINA.

Alas, that I have liv'd
To see this day!—yet know—since Heav'n decrees
This dreadful trial of my constancy,
Heav'n also hath prepar'd my heart to meet it.
My fixt resolve hath been, that Harold's Wife
Shall know no other Lord, save Him alone,
To whom, with saints above and saints on earth,
She vows to dedicate her widow'd life.

HAROLD.

'Tis greatly said.—Honour, Religion, Love
Accept this sacrifice.—Yet there remains—
'Tis painful,—Oh! 'tis agony to part;—
Collect thy utmost fortitude to bear it;—
We soon shall meet again.

CHRISTINA.

To part—indeed
Were agonising pain.—We must not part.—
O! let thy guardian spirit hover near me;
Hear all my vows, and bear them to the skies;
Till this sad scene of penitence be clos'd,
When my purg'd soul shall take its flight with thee,
And share those joys, which gracious Heav'n ordains
To virtue great as thine.

HAROLD.

Thy voice, thy words,

L 2

As

As if attun'd to harps angelic, charm
My dying senses.—Sister—

EDITHA.

Sure at length
The cup of our calamity is full!—

H A R O L D.

O daughters of Affliction!—take my last—
My last embrace.—I feel the hand of Death
Lie heavy on me.—Retire—

EDITHA.

A long farewell!—

C H R I S T I N A.

It cannot be.—O treacherous Fortitude,
How art thou vanquish'd now!—Despair and fondness
Seize on my heart—and raise such tumult there!—
'Tis link'd to thine, and they must burst together.

H A R O L D.

Thou would'st not see me die—

C H R I S T I N A.

Diffraction!—Oh!—

S T I G A N D.

This tenderness is cruelty;—Virgins,
Assist, and bear her hence.

C H R I S T I N A.

A TRAGEDY.

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CHRISTINA.

O do not part us!

Moments are precious now—each worth an age.—

Pull not so strong;—now, now you rend my heart-strings!—

STIGAND.

This awful hour demands respect and peace.

CHRISTINA.

Yet one look more;—a long one let it be.—

HAROLD.

These eyes, till clos'd for ever, cannot lose thee.

SCENE THE LAST.

HAROLD, STIGAND.

HAROLD.

And now the bitterness of death is past.—

Full oft for England's freedom have I fought;

And in that cause, that glorious cause, I die.

The rest belongs to Heav'n,—whose eye beholds.

The sparrow fall,—and hath not seen the blood,

The noblest blood of nations, shed this day,

Pour'd out in vain.

STIGAND.

The ways of Heav'n are just,

Though all unsearchable to mortal eyes:

He knows from evil to deduce the good;

Can

As if attun'd to harps angelic, charm
My dying senses.—Sister—

EDITHA.

Sure at length
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A TRAGEDY.

85

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Though all unsearchable to mortal eyes:

He knows from evil to deduce the good;

Can

Can raise the vanquish'd, or depress the victor;
 And virtuous sufferings, that fulfill his will,
 Rewards with tenfold recompense.

HAROLD.

On those
 Most virtuous, most deserving, yet most wretched,
 My Sister and my Queen,—be these rewards
 Bestow'd.—Farewell, my Friend!—My eyes grow dim.—
 The noon-tide sun is darkness,—and this pang,—
 O save my Country,—Heav'n!—this pang is death.

STIGAND.

Farewell, thou best of Monarchs, and of Men!
 Thy life was virtue, and its end is honour.
 High on the roll of Fame thy name shall stand,
 High among those the highest,—Patriot Kings,
 Who in the cause of Liberty have fought,
 And bravely conquer'd, or as bravely died.

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FINIS.

E R R A T A.

- Page 24, line 7 from bottom, for *tempest*, read *Tempest*.
27, line 11 from top, for *meets*, read *meet*.
37, line 5 from bottom, for *awfull*, read *awful*.
45, line 10 from top, for *stepp'd*, read *stept*.
48, line 8 from top, a *comma* at the end, instead of the *period*.
62, line 5 from bottom, for *wrapp'd*, read *wrapt*.
71, line 2 from bottom, for *wrapp'd*, read *wrapt*.

E R A T A

Page 25, line 7 from bottom, "the" changed to "and"
26, line 11 from top, "for" changed to "and"
27, line 2 from bottom, "the" changed to "and"
28, line 10 from top, "the" changed to "and"
29, line 3 from bottom, "the" changed to "and"
30, line 1 from top, "the" changed to "and"
31, line 1 from bottom, "the" changed to "and"

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